

Bombing at Pearl Harbor

Memories by Geraldine Ekins

When we got married we went to Hawaii. : Well, we arrived there Thanksgiving Day and in two weeks the World War II broke out. We were there until 1945 and went through some difficult times, but we loved every bit of it and we enjoyed being in that lovely climate. In fact, Abe says he's sorry that he came back to all this cold weather.

On the Day of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, well, I was in the apartment and Abe left just as soon as the news came on the radio. He was told to report for duty so he left. He never came back until twelve o'clock that night.

So there were two or three ladies in these apartments. We all got together and stayed in one apartment because we didn't know whether we'd be bombed or when we'd see our husbands come back. We had a bomb that did land about two blocks from where we were and burned up everything in the whole block.

But every time the alarm went off we had to go under a bridge that was near there. Well the bombing was mostly out of Pearl Harbor, but the bomb that hit in town was accidental probably. They didn't know who belonged to what. The LDS temple was never bombed.

We got an excerpt from one of our LDS people, a Japanese man, that he was a bomber that was to go over and bomb the temple. He went over three times and he wasn't allowed to. He couldn't release the bomb so we knew that the Lord was there to protect the temple and he later became a member of the Church.

All the ships at Pearl Harbor were bombed.

. We went to Hawaii when we first got married. Well, it was two weeks, between my folks and his before we could get reservations and we weren't in the same room aboard the ship. We had to take cancellations. I was with girls and he was with boys. Even after you got married you couldn't make those arrangements to have a living space together. We were actually on our honeymoon then when the explosion took place. That's kind of a rude awakening.

Yes. Well, I was going to finish my last year of college there, and when I went to check with them, I had more classes than the teachers that were teaching. And I wanted tailoring, clothing, and I had all my psychology and all my education classes and all that kind of thing and I was supposed to go to an outside island to practice. I'd have to go to one of the other islands to do the practice teaching and I was a new bride from a little town in Lehi and I couldn't see that.

They said that we'll teach you how to do Hawaiian food, but we had no one that can teach you tailoring. So I went down to the FBI and because I didn't know anyone there they said they couldn't use anybody so I went to the Military Intelligence and was put on and worked for them all the time I was there.

Abe was not in the service. He went down as a civilian. And he was froze on his job with the Navy and I was with the Army and so sometimes we'd coordinate our vacations together.

That's was an awakening to the world, the bombing in the harbor. They interned most of the Japanese that were on the Hawaiian Islands. they had them leave. Now I don't know just where they interned them, but I had to write up a lot of histories and Abe wanted to know if his friends were in those histories and I said, "I can't tell you."

After the sinking, they raised part of them. But the one

that had so many men on, it's a memorial now to the World War II-the memorial in the ocean.

We came home about three years later. We had a two week vacation and we couldn't come on the same ship. So I arrived in San Francisco—I was there a whole week before he came. And then we didn't tell our folks so I had to wait until he got there before we could come back to Utah.

A lot of things were rationed. I couldn't get shoes. I couldn't get nylons unless I waited in line and I was working. So lots of times I went bare legged because it was rationed. You couldn't get fresh eggs. We had powdered eggs that we ate. We had an apartment and by the time I found out where to go get black denim to cover the windows because it was all sold out. So I would cook Abe's breakfast and go out in the moonlight to see if it was cooked enough and so we had a hard time for quite awhile.

Yes they felt that they were going to return to bomb again. They left great big tanks of oil that were all painted white. And they left, the dry dock which is where they repaired the ships, and they left gas tanks and so we thought they were going to come back to use them.

It was mostly military who lost their lives. We had quite a few military there at Pearl Harbor. I'd say there were six ships that were there and most of them were burning and servicemen would jump in the water. They said they'd try to push the oil away from their face because the oil would start to burn on the water and he said many of them suffocated and died that way.

So the people were very protective. You had to cover your windows, show no lights in the windows. Not even the keyhole could have light coming out of it. So it was a black place so they couldn't see. I guess the hospital was full. The care for people was important and necessary.

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We sent a telegram to our parents as soon as we could get down to the building to send it, but because there was so many military messages going out they didn't get it for a week. So they suffered not knowing what happened to us.

Well it's a heavenly place and it was just a honeymoon all the time we were there because it rains everyday and you don't have the dust. And you don't have to put up fruit because there's always fresh fruit for everybody to eat and the ocean. If you have time off, you go to the ocean and swim—and delightful climate and no cold. You could swim on Christmas Day if you wanted.